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Friday Morning, February 5, 1915

"THE EMERGENCY CLAUSE"

A surprising number of emergencies have suggested themselves to the members of the legislature. The statement has been made, and it is probably true, that half the bills so far introduced contain the emergency clause, wherein, when we consider all the circumstances, we are not surprised. The emergency clause was designed by the makers of the constitution as a means of escape from the referendum in the case of an existing emergency, says the Arizona Republican. But at the time when we adopted the initiative and referendum we did not realize the extent to which the referendum might be abused; how the will of the people might be suspended for at least two years by a very insignificant minority of the people. The percentage of the voters required to invoke the referendum was made so ridiculously low that it is possible to suspend for two years the most popular and useful measure that could be enacted.

It does not appear to have occurred to the members of the constitutional convention that the referendum would ever be applied for selfish purposes, whereas in almost every case it has been applied, there has been a selfish, political or factional motives behind the application.

This subject has been raised in th econsideration of the county seat removal bill, as it could not probably have been so forcibly raised in the discussion of any other bill. A similar removal bill was passed by the last legislature. Without it, not a county seat in Arizona could be removed. In some of the counties, one at least, under the present law, the county seat could not be removed though every voter in th ecounty might desire of it. They confused it in some vague way with the subject before the voters

The referendum bill was invoked against the removal bill and the bill was defeated by less than one-third of the voters ho cut to the polls. Probably half of those who voted against it did so without the slightest understanding of it. They confused it in some vague ay iwth the very unpopular Gila county division bill. It is no ownder, therefor that those who believe that a large majority of the people of a county are safeguarding the present bill against the referendum which in itself may be regarded, in its present shape, as an emergency to be avoided.

It is a matter of record that the first use of the emergency clause by the first state legislature was a gross and indefensible abuse of it. The clause was attached three years ago to a bill repealing the six-mile limit law, when no emergency affecting the public peace, health or safety existed or was threatened. Only the business of the saloon-keepers of Tucson were in peril of a temporary suspension.

It is , perhaps, a good thing that the present wholesale use of the emergency clause, in some cases not strictly warranted, is being made. It will doubtless result in a remodeling of the referendum, for if that is not done it will cease to be a factor in all legislation which may be enacted by two-thirds of the members of both houses.

A NATION ON WAR RATIONS

Much has ben said, since the war began, of the "siege of Germany" by the allies. But nothing has so impressed the world with the reality of that siege as has the action of the federal council of the German Empire in siezing all foodstuffs and putting the people on rations.

It is hard for an American, with his notions of private enterprise and individual freedom, to appreciate the sweeping effect of this act. All private business transactions in corn, wheat and flour are forbidden. The government is confiscating all the supplies of these commodities in the empire at a fixed price. Government distributing offices are being established everywhere, and the grain and flour will be doled out in fixed portions, according to the number of inhabitants.

It is a simple step for Germany to take, in spite of its sweeping extent. Here the burden of the government undertaking to regulate the feeding of the nation would be insupportable; the bureaucratic system of Germany, organized to the smallest detail, and operating among a people accustomed to obedience, accomplishes its purpose efficiently, with little friction. Civilians acquiesce as readily as soldiers at the front.

The measure was unexpected. Previous reports from Germany had spoken with confidence of her food supply. It was generally supposed that the empire contained a "war store" of grain comparable, in a way, to the "war chest" at Spandau. But the belief must have been krong. It is suddenly evident that Germany is facing a crisis in its food supply, and that crisis may be of serious enoug hproportions to turn the scale of the war. The action of the federal council is an admition that Germany's population may go hungry before the close of the year, possibly before the July harvest. It is an admission that the allies have succeeded beyond expectation in their blockade and embargo. The "ring of steel" is doing its work.

Previous orders from this same council had enjoined frugality on the civilian population. All were urged to stop feeding grain to domestic animals, to boil their potatoes with their jackets on so that none might be wasted, to save their garbage for livestock provender, to use less meat and to eat "war bread". Restrictions had been imposed on millers and bakers in November. Maximum prices were fixed by the government, and flour was to be made with no more than 75 per cent wheat, while bread had to contain at least 10 per cent rye. Factories were established to make "potsto flakes" to mix with flour.

The Kaiser himself set an example of frugality for three months he has religiously eaten the "war bread", permitting no white bread on the royal table at Berlin, or at the headquarters of the general staff He has banned all dainties. His breakfast is said to consist of an egg with tea or coffee and this nourishing but unpalatable bread. For lunch he has a simple soup with meat or vegetables, but no broth. The evening meal is more generous, but there is no dessert, and potatoes are eaten "skins and all", according to the Vossische Zeitung.

An examination of the grain reports of the empire for the last two years sheds light on this procedure In 1913, when Germany's wheat crop was exceptionally large, she imported $107,000,000 worth of wheat, $101,000,000 worth of barley and $25,000,000 worth of corn The plain fact is , that Germany is very far from being self-supporting. She must import food from Russia Hungary, America and elsewhere, or starve.

Last year the German wheat crop was 140,000,000 bushels less than the year before. Worse still, the Hungarian crop was short, cutting off a supply from that source. A careful review of the situation at Berlin on July 1 resulted in the conclusion that there was only two months' supply of wheat left. The July harvest, therefore, added to that, without the possibility of extensive imports, must have left Germany far short of enough grain to last until the coming harvest.

And this year's harvest is almost certain to be short. The women and old men to whom will fall the burden of sowing and reaping cannot produce a normal crop.

It is evident, then, that Germany may soon be in a very serious predicament unless she gets wheat and flour from abroad. And how can she get them? On the west, south and east the allies are in control, and little further help can be expected from Scandinavia Great Britain will now enforce ehr blockade more strictly than ever, and food from America or elsewhere destined for Germany will almost certainly be barred as contraband.

So the great siege is on, and 70,000,000 are to be starved into submission.

OCEAN-TO-OCEAN TALK

The telephone was revealed to the world at our national centennial in 1876. Dr. Alexander Graham Bell had invented it the year before. Dr. Bell and Thomas W. Watson, his assistant, succeeded inconversing two miles apart—about four times as far as a man can shout.

And now, just the other day, Dr. Bell sat down to a telephone instrument in New York City and Mr. Watson sat down to another in San Francisco, and they carried on a conversation across the intervening 3,400 miles of cities, prairies, mountains and deserts, more easily and securely than they had done at Philadelphia 38 years before. Seldom has an inventor lived to see the work of his brain achieve such power and perfection.

It is an impressive coincidence that the first transcontinental telephone conversation occurred almost exactly at the same time as the census bureau assured us our population reached 100,000,000.

An interested third party to this memorable talk was Theodore N. Vail, who, with his ear to the receiver down on Jekyl Island, off the coast of Georgia, heard every word almost as distinctly as if the three men had been sitting in the same room. He then "sat in" himself, and talked 4,750 miles.

Mr. Vail had a good right to share in that historic event. It is he who, as president of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, has made possible this tremendous development of Dr. Bell's invention. Hereafter any one of the hundred millions of us can talk to any of the other 99,999,999 without getting out of his office.

Federal reserve banks of the country increased holdings of municipal warrants last week from $255,000 to $6,647,000, of which New York's share is $5,050,000.

Financial circles in London understand that arrangements are nearly complete for a provisional loan to Italy by certain British and French banking houses.

Cotton exports from the United States last week were larger than in any week of 1914, and they were larger by 50% than in the same week a year ago.

The Siege of The Seven Suitors

By

MEREDITH NICHOLSON

CHAPTER XX.

Seven Gold Reeds.

I WATCHED her hands as they deftly cut and fashioned some dry reeds. The air grew warm as the sun climbed to the zenith and Hezekiah flung aside her coat. The breeze caught the ends of her tie and snapped them behind her. She was wholly absorbed in her task, and no boy could have managed a pocket knife better. The first reed she made a trifle longer than her hand. The succeeding ones she trimmed to graduated lessening lengths, till seven in all had been cut, and then she notched them.

"Seven," she murmured, laying them neatly in order on her knee. "I remember the right number by a poem I read the other day in an old magazine."

She reached down and plucked several long leaves of tough grass with which she began to bind the reeds together, repeating:

"Seven gold reeds grew tall and slim
Close by the river's headed brim.
Syrinx, the nymph, direct past;
Pan, the goat hoofed, followed fast.

"It will be easier," said Hezekiah, "if you hold the pipes while I tie them."

I found this propinquity wholly agreeable. It was pleasant to sit on a log beside Hezekiah. It seemed no far cry to the storied Mediterranean and Pan and dryads and naiads, as Hezekiah bound her reeds to the music of couplets. There was no self consciousness in her recitation. She seemed to be telling of something that she had seen herself an hour ago.

"He spread his arms to clasp her there
Just as she vanished into air
And to his bosom, warm and rough,
Drew the gold reeds close enough.

"I don't remember the rest," she broke off. "But there! That's a pipe fit for any shepherd."

She put it to her lips and blew. I shall not pretend that the result was melodious. She whistled much better without the reeds, but the sight of her, sitting on the fallen tree beside the lake, beating time with her foot, her head thrown back, her eyes half closed in a mockery of rapture at the shrill, wheezy uncertainties and ineptitudes she evoked, thrilled me with new and wonderful longings. A heart, a spirit like hers would never grow old. She was next of kin to all the elusive, fugitive company of the elf world. And on such a pipe as she had strung together beside that pond to this day Scottish shepherd boys whistle themselves into tune with Theocritus!

"Take it," she said. "I can't tell you more than I have, and yet it is all there, Chimneys. Read the riddle of the reeds if you can."

I took the pipe and turned it over carefully in my hands, but I fear my thoughts were rather of the hands that had fashioned it, the fingers that had danced nimbly upon the stops.

"There are seven reeds—seven," she affirmed.

She amused herself by skipping pebbles over the surface of the water while I pondered, and I deliberated long, for one did not like to blunder before Hezekiah. Then I jumped up and called to her.

"One, two, three, four, five, six—seven! Not until the seventh man offers himself shall Cecilia have a husband. Is that the answer?"

For a moment Hezekiah watched the widening ripples made by the casting of her last pebble. Then she came back and resumed her seat.

"You have done well, Chimney Man, and now I'll not make you guess any more, though I found it all out for myself. When Aunt Octavia gave that memorandum book to Cecilia I knew it must have something to do with the seventh man. You know I love all Aunt Octavia's nonsense because it's the kind of foolishness I like myself, and the idea of a pretty little note book to write down proposals in was precisely the sort of thing that would have occurred to my aunt. And it was in the bargain, too, that she herself should not in any way interfere or try to influence the course of events. It should be the seventh suitor, willy nilly. And I suspect she's been a little scared too."

"She has indeed! She was almost ready to throw the whole scheme over last night. Your naughtiness had got on her nerves."

"You missed the target that time. Aunt Octavia loves my naughtiness, and I think she has really been afraid Sir Pumpkin Wiggins would catch me. Now, I didn't roam my aunt's house just for fun. I was doing my best to keep Cecilia from getting into some scrape about that seventh suitor plan. I found out by chance how to get into Hopefield and about the hidden stairway and the old rooms locked away there. Papa really discovered that. A carpenter in Katonah who worked on the house helped to build papa's bungalow, and he told us how that ruin came to be there. That dyspepsia cure man, who also immortalized himself by inventing the ribless umbrella, was very superstitious. He believed that if he built an entirely new house he would die. So he had his architect build around and retain those two rooms and that stairway of a house that had been on the ground almost since the Revolution. Mr. Pepperton, the architect, humored him, but hid the remains of the relic as far out of sight as possible."

"Trust Pep for that! And he did it neatly!"

"Yes, but it didn't save the umbrella man. He died anyhow—or maybe his pies killed him. Papa was so curious

"I wish, Hezekiah, that you would stay caught!"

about it that he took me with him one night just before Aunt Octavia moved here, and he and I found the rooms and the stair and the secret spring by which, if you know just where to poke the wall in the fourth floor hall you can disappear as mysteriously as you please."

"But how on earth did you darken the halls so easily? You nearly gave me heart disease doing that!"

"Oh, that was a mere matter of a young lady in haste! When I found how easily I could pass you on the stair it became a fascinating game, and it was no end of fun to see just how long it would take you to catch me."

"I wish, Hezekiah, that you would stay caught!"

"Be very, very careful, sir! We're talking business now. There's another ordeal for you before you dare become sentimental!"

"Then hasten. Let us be after it."

"Things are in a serious predicament, I can tell you. I was frightened when I looked into that notebook. I didn't like to do that, but I had to assist Providence a little. Five men have already got their quietus."

"Then why don't they clear out and stop their nonsense?"

(To be continued)

AUTO AMBULANCES TO EUROPE

WASHINGTON, D. C., Feb 4.—Seventeen automobile donated by Harvard-Yale students have been turned over to the American Red Cross to be shipped to Europe soon for use on the battlefield.

"CATCH AS CATCH CAN"